1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

222 237 ing. The combs found here are round and hang from tree branches. They are found by observing the flight of bees; this requires good eyesight and is difficult on cloudy days. The clear weather of late spring and fall consequently is the time of greatest activity. From December until warm weather begins, the honey is sugared and cannot be extracted from the comb.

Several varieties of bees are sought. The combs found near Cherán are white and have little honey, most of the comb being occupied by brood. In the region near Tanaco the combs are red, small, and almost completely full of honey, with little brood. Other combs are described as being occupied by bees that are *muy bravo*. Only this type of bee requires the use of smoke to secure the honey. At times this bee attacks passers-by and follows until the victim covers himself with straw. Lemon [752] juice is used to alleviate the stings. In addition to these types, wild European bees are sometimes found in hollow trees.

Once a comb is located, the *panalero* usually climbs the tree and knocks the comb down. If [481] the tree is large, he cuts notches in the trunk [412] with a small special-type ax, tying himself with a riata or a length of rope while he chops. The rope is not tied, but passes around the tree trunk and the two ends are held in the hands. The *panalero* holds the rope tightly while he edges up the tree. Then, with a skillful motion, he throws the loop of rope higher up the tree trunk. Once the comb is reached, the *panalero* covers his face and hands with a blanket and taps the comb until the bees leave. The procedures are regarded as highly dangerous. *Panaleros* are always careful to take a good rest before climbing a tree. They are also particularly attentive to their saint, San Anselmo, who is believed to protect them. The danger of the occupation is increased by the fact that the *panalero* always works alone and in case of accident could expect no rescue.

Honeycombs are now said to be so scarce that it is hardly worth while hunting them. Nevertheless, one *panalero* mentioned securing 19 combs on one trip which he sold for 9 pesos. Sometimes the combs are sold as collected. At other times the honey is extracted by squeezing the comb in an *ayate* or carrying net. If very

753 are recognized as of mechanical origin. Some diseases are vaguely regarded as of natural causation and as possibly contagious; others are clearly of supernatural character even though curable by natural means, although the line between the two is not sharp. In either case, herbs, unguents, and drugs are believed capable of helping the sickness. To utilize these methods of curing requires no special ability but merely knowledge. Many minor ailments
759 are treated at home; the curer is merely a person of greater knowledge who is called in when home remedies fail or the case is obviously beyond the knowledge of the household. Similarly, the doctor at Parácho is called only when the curer fails or the case is believed beyond the curer's powers. Obviously, this situation has not greatly enhanced the reputation of the doctor, for most of his patients are nearly moribund some hours before he can reach them.

757 Curers usually make a diagnosis first. No information on methods could be secured. It appears that a visual inspection and questioning of the patients are parts of the diagnosis, and possibly the only diagnosis. Once the diagnosis is made, the curer decides what steps to take to cure the patient. Often herbs kept on hand can be used; others, however, must be specially sought because they must be collected either fresh or at certain hours of the day.

753 In general, sickness by some is related to the strength of the blood which resides below the
[826] nape of the neck. This is also the location of the individual's life. Persons with much blood are healthy. When persons are seriously ill, it is because their blood is scanty; when there is insufficient to nourish the "seat of life," the person dies. There are also vague concepts of sickness being caused by "heat" or "cold," (sophisticated Agustín attributed a cold to drinking water while sweating) "airs" (which may also be either hot or cold), fright (*espanto*), and, much more specific, evil eye.

752 Broken bones are treated by specialists, who
[759] may also be curers of diseases or, in one case at least, midwives. The bones are manipulated into place and bound to splints without other treatment.

Dislocations are massaged repeatedly with olive oil until the bones are back in place. They

752 are then covered with belladonna leaves. Bruises are sometimes cured by splitting a lizard and applying it to the injured place.

Hernia is recognized as being from natural causes through lifting heavy weights. One curer treats the ailments with massage with oils. The patient also takes medicine made by collecting all the kinds of alcoholic drinks the curer can find, such as *charanda*, sherry, etc., and mixing them together. The patient takes a third to a half cup of the mixture every morning before breakfast.

757 Headache, ép'amerâni, is extremely common and is ordinarily treated with home remedies. A patch of some herb (or of adhesive plaster or court plaster bought in the stores) is applied to each temple. Some people wear these patches almost constantly, especially some women.

753 757 *Bilis*, bile, is one of the commonest diseases, especially among children; it also is one of the most difficult to define. Often the vaguest of symptoms are attributed to *bilis*. Lassitude, especially in young persons, often is diagnosed as *bilis*. According to one curer, however, the patient turns yellow, seems tired, and develops sores similar to those of smallpox. Three causes are given for *bilis*, air in the stomach from waiting too long for a meal, not getting enough to eat and so getting air in the stomach, and getting air in the stomach from any other cause. Children are sometimes born with *bilis* and are thought to become infected in the womb. Treatments of *bilis* are vague. *Flor de pila* well cooked with cinnamon, and given by the teaspoon as a tonic, and an infusion of *simonillo* are two remedies. *Amargo* (see below) is another remedy.

Stomach pains are also regarded as being caused by air, either hot or cold. *Basa*, a pain on either side, is also caused by air, or by drinking too much water. *Espinocilla*, a red-flowered plant, is good for both these afflictions. Nopal leaves are put on the soles of the feet for too much heat in the stomach. (See below for account of a cure of one of the members of the staff.)

Itch or mange, *sarna*, súta, is treated with unguents purchased in the drug store, polvo Juan and mercuric ointment.

Heart trouble, *latido de corazón*, is recognized from pains in the heart and by palpita-

753 757 tions. There is a high fever, a cough, and sometimes the patient spits blood. The patient is rubbed with oil of seven different flowers, bought in the drug store, and given an infusion of sunflowers, spines from the tejecote tree, prickly pear, chayote, and dry white and red maize leaves. The infusion is taken several times a day in place of water. The disease may be caused if the person arrives somewhere very agitated and drinks cold water or something cold, *fresca*. One informant thought eating lice was good for heart trouble.

752 753 Piles, *almorranas*, are cured with a remedy made with copper sulfate and lard washed with vinegar, unguent of serato, and drying salve (*pomada secante*). One of the assistants was told confidentially, and as a thing not to be passed on, that cauterization with a hot iron was also employed.

753 757 Erysipelas, čarápiti, appears with a high fever, which increases. There is angry red swelling and much pain. The cause given is allowing the clothing to dry on the body if one becomes soaked; the disease is also an accompaniment of wounds. The patient is given a cooked infusion of *yerba de cancer* and asked to eat only milk, sago, and orange-leaf tea.

753 755 Salmoneda is a disease of small children; they fall down in fits. The cause is fright, *espanto*, and the disease is cured by burning copal and having the child inhale the smoke.

753 757 Smallpox, kuarósikua, occurs every March. There are 3 days of fever, 3 days of cough and fever accompanied by breaking out of the pustules, 3 days of feeding to regain strength. After the sixth day the pustules begin to dry up. Possibility of contagion from using the same cup, spoon, etc., is recognized. The stage accompanied by the cough is treated with burro's milk (application not clear) and a common herb occurring on the streets, ɟákua peréně. The latter is boiled and drunk instead of water.

Sarampión, measles, usually occurs in March also and is regarded as much more dangerous than smallpox (although this may be true, it seems more likely that the identification of diseases is faulty). The patients get a red rash, fever, and colds. An infusion of grapefruit (?) is used to bring out the rash; if the rash does not come out the patient may not

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

a recently killed coyote have been placed just before the water reaches the boiling point.

Scorpion stings are treated by giving the patient immediately a drink made by boiling *casaguate* with salt. Another treatment is to give powder produced by rubbing two stones together. The powder is dissolved in water. The wound is also rubbed with lemon juice.

Rabies is treated by giving water in which has been macerated a ball of the male ash tree (male and female trees are distinguished).

Sickly children are treated by bathing them with turtle blood. After a sufficient number of fresh water turtles are collected, they are made to put out the head by putting coals on the shell. The neck is then severed with a single blow of a machete, and the turtle is suspended over the head of the child (who is standing naked) so the blood streams down from head to foot.

DEATH

Death is regarded as a normal event in Cherán and mourning is restrained and, in the main, private. Somewhat more grief is shown when the deceased is a child or a person still vigorous. An old person, who has begun to lose some of his vigor, is often spoken of as only half alive. Similarly, very small children are often regarded as not fully alive. For persons already regarded as not fully members of the community of the living, no great emotional response to death may be expected.

Ideas about death and afterlife are essentially Catholic. Small children who die are believed to go directly to heaven, while adults must pass some time in purgatory. The dead are not particularly feared, nor is it believed that they ordinarily return. However, if a person dreams frequently of a dead relative it is believed that the deceased individual has returned for a member of his family and that one of the household will certainly die. There is no remedy for such a situation.

Because of the different beliefs regarding the afterlife of children and adults, there are some differences in funerals for the two age groups.

In the case of a child, the godfather of baptism provides the burial dress, which is placed on the body by the godmother or the mother, or by the sisters of the mother. The body is not